

Lapis and Peridot's Talk Show, Carmen's Desperate Move, and A Return to Japan

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](https://archiveofourown.org/works/21218822) at <https://archiveofourown.org/works/21218822>.

Rating:	Teen And Up Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Categories:	F/F , F/M , Multi , Other
Fandoms:	Carmen Sandiego (Cartoon 2019) , Steven Universe (Cartoon) , She-Ra and the Princesses of Power (2018) , Shoujo Kakumei Utena Revolutionary Girl Utena
Relationships:	Player & Carmen Sandiego , Black Sheep , Connie Maheswaran/Steven Universe , Pearl/Adora , Amethyst & Garnet & Pearl & Steven Universe , Amethyst & Steven Universe , Garnet & Steven Universe , Garnet & Carmen Sandiego , Bismuth & Carmen Sandiego , Peridot & Pumpkin (Steven Universe) , Pumpkin & Steven Universe , Lapis Lazuli & Pumpkin , Ruby/Sapphire (Steven Universe) , Lapis Lazuli/Peridot (Steven Universe) , Himemiya Anthy & Lapis Lazuli (Steven Universe) & Peridot (Steven Universe) & Tenjou Utena , Himemiya Anthy/Tenjou Utena , Chu-Chu & Tenjou Utena , Chu-Chu & Himemiya Anthy , Julia "Jules" Argent & The Chief , Julia "Jules" Argent & Carmen Sandiego , Greg Universe & Steven Universe
Characters:	Lapis Lazuli (Steven Universe) , Peridot (Steven Universe) , Steven Universe , Connie Maheswaran , Tenjou Utena , Himemiya Anthy , Ronaldo Fryman , Bismuth (Steven Universe) , Priyanka Maheswaran , Greg Universe , Garnet (Steven Universe) , Pearl (Steven Universe) , Amethyst (Steven Universe) , Carmen Sandiego , Black Sheep , The Chief (Carmen Sandiego) , Player (Carmen Sandiego 2019) , Julia "Jules" Argent , Adora (She-Ra) , Chu-Chu (Utena) , Pumpkin (Steven Universe) , Flask Robonoid(s) (Steven Universe) , Stevonnie (Steven Universe)
Additional Tags:	Nerd Peridot (Steven Universe) , Pumpkins , Magic , Crystal Gems , Multiple Crossovers , Chess , Japanese Culture , Gardens & Gardening , Crossovers & Fandom Fusions , Crossover Pairings , Emotional Hurt/Comfort , Psychological Trauma , Swords & Sorcery , Established Relationship , Implied Relationships , Developing Relationship , Developing Friendships , Talk Shows , Badass Peridot (Steven Universe) , Yokohama , Hot Tub , Gem Fusion , Food , Yuri , Bathing/Washing , LGBTQ Themes , Slow Burn , Waterbending & Waterbenders , Podfic Welcome
Language:	English
Series:	Part 12 of An Unlikely Alliance Against Evildoers
Stats:	Published: 2019-10-28 Words: 5,648 Chapters: 1/1

Lapis and Peridot's Talk Show, Carmen's Desperate Move, and A Return to Japan

by [lefemmerouge](#)

Summary

Carmen and Utena remain scarred from the horrifying things they saw in Yokohama, Japan. In contrast, Peridot and Lapis have moved forward. They are realizing their dream to host a talk show. Even though this boosts everyone's spirits, for Carmen, desperate times call for desperate measures. Lapis, Peridot, Steven, Connie, Bismuth, and Pumpkin are drawn to Japan, some for a second time, to face evildoers who want to use the candy people to their own devious ends...

Notes

I am using [my map](#) for locations in this story. I have used the name Peri as an abbreviation for Peridot, apart from the first mention, to make her more personable.

Comments are welcome and appreciated.

Update on 1/1/25: This fic was reposted [on Squidge World](#) under the title "Lapis and Peridot's Talk Show, Carmen's Desperation, and Japan Redux." I have also changed dialogue and wording to make the fic more clear and stronger to emphasize the points in this fic. The updates on Squidge World have been applied here. I have also changed the rating of this fic from General Audiences to Teen and Up to reflect the discussion of mature topics. Some parts clearly fall into "General Audiences" but enough sections fall into "Teen and Up" to warrant this changed rating.

See the end of the work for [more notes](#)

Peridot smiled and adjusted the webcam, with Lapis sitting on a bench in the background, inside the "Peri-shack" she had built with Peri. They lived there as a temporary home, for the time being, until something more permanent could be constructed. Although it was better than the Beach House bathroom, it didn't feel like home to either of them. Even so, both were excited to begin a new and grand project using the building as a backdrop: their own show on the video-sharing website, TubeTube. The fact that Steven had over a hundred subscribers on his channel, including friends within the town, lovers of music, and fans of *Crying Breakfast Friends!*, a show with a loyal audience, producing content which could be called "solid and quality programming," *gave them inspiration.*

This new show was tentatively called "Our Home Now." It would focus on weird and funky stuff that happened in Beach City and on Earth. In the future, fan art made for *Camp Pining Hearts*, especially shipping specific characters, controversial topics, and new meep morps, they had put together, could be incorporated. Steven and Greg worked the sound system to add in recorded special effects. Although the nascent show wasn't getting any ad revenue at the present, they were hopeful this would change in the future. Focusing on listeners, standing for *something*, ignoring those that told them how to be hosts, and being the best, they could be, all seemed doable.

Their interview skills were still growing, but Lapis and Peri could entertain an audience, and project creative energy. Their presentation, teamwork, and interpersonal skills were good, as was their ability to work under pressure. Their unique way of dressing, cleverness, forthrightness, and special hairstyles, inspired by the manga series, *Pretty Hairstylist*, would also help. Both hoped their listeners and viewers could be easily informed, involved, and entertained. They would hopefully tap into various demographics whether in Beach City, Empire City or anywhere. While Peri's tablet had a good sound and video quality, using a stationary camera attached to the tablet would make a better show.

The Peri-Shack served as a great place to film. Being as prepared as always, a script had been written and rehearsed before they were about to go live, with the natural light from the outside lighting the Peri-Shack, with the set designed and created by Peri. While Pearl helped them with makeup, Connie manned the camera, ensuring that it stayed stationary and avoided close-ups unless necessary. Each weekly episode would be 10-11 minutes long, with hopes it would grow to new heights. Steven had promoted the show to his friends, who shared it with their friends, Lapis and Peri shared it through their connections in REZU chat circles. And with that, their show began with a catchy jingle:

"We may not be members of the human race/since we come from outer space/But we still have a place/on this blue planet of wonder

'Hello everyone! I'm Lapis and...I'm Peri! Welcome to the first episode of Our Home Now!

'Today we are going to be talking about those awful, horrible, and disgusting candy beings that took over Ohtori Academy in Yokahoma, Japan about a week ago. We have on the phone my good friend Utena Tenjou who personally witnessed the event. Utena, can you describe what you saw to our audience?

'Yes, I can, Peri. Thanks for having me on your show and I hope it goes well. I'm going to tell all my friends about this show and spread the word about your wonderful show! I'll do my best to recall what happened on that fateful day. Me, Adora, Pearl, Carmen, Zack, and Ivy made our way to the academy. This is emotional for me, so forgive me if I begin to cry.

'The gates had been opened. That is an unusual occurrence. I say that because during the whole time I went there, the gates were always closed, to keep the place contained. As such, the gates of the academy only opened on special occasions or by a directive of some kind. Anyway, as I looked across the courtyard, I could see some former classmates turning into candy as these pink things took over their bodies. Since these people obviously don't attend the academy anymore, I think a reunion was held there, explaining why they were all in attendance. Seeing them be so violently transformed into other beings traumatized me. I can barely speak about it now. At least I didn't lose my dear Anthy or my pet Chu-Chu to those horrible beings! Who would do such a thing!

With tears streaming down her face she stopped for a second. She realized she had to finish up her story without making their first episode sad and depressing. Sniffling, she picked up the phone again, although listeners heard her crying.

"Sorry I got so emotional, but this is a tender subject for me. Anyway, back to my story. As I sat on my knees at the school gates sobbing at the spectacle before me, I looked up to see Carmen, Pearl, Zack, and Ivy advancing forward. I tried to yell and warn them to stop, but they my voice likely didn't register. I watched Zack and Ivy try to pick up this pod that had fallen from the sky and unleashed these little pink beasts, but due to its weight it couldn't be lifted. I saw something else that still terrifies me. Carmen and Pearl were able to get to safety, but Ivy, then Zach were taken over by the candy beings, swallowed up just like my former classmates. It seemed these beings would overrun us all and the town, but luckily you and Lapis came at the right time and whisked us away from that awful place. We heard a message coming out of the pod when we left, telling the candy people to stop. That was a week ago and I haven't gone back into town since, haunted by what I saw that day.

'Thank you, Utena, for sharing your story. You are a brave soul and we thank you for telling us and our audience what happened there.

'Before we open up the phone lines, we'd like to play some raw footage from about a week ago, showing what happened. Warning, this material may be graphic.

As the surveillance tapes played, Peri was relieved. The first half of their show had ended, meaning it was time for the second half. Lapis and Peri switched chairs, with Lapis now sitting in the anchor chair, ready to respond to any callers.

"And that's all the footage we have. If you live or are currently in Japan, feel free to send us any additional videos or photographs, so we can all see the situation there. The phone lines are open. We have our first caller. You are live on the air.

'Hi, this is Ronaldo in Beach City. Thanks for creating this show. I really look forward to future episodes. I'm going to pose something that might sound off the wall. I think those

pink beings were sent by some fiendish princess who wants to colonize the universe! It's all so clear now. I thought it was the Great Diamond Authority behind it all, but it is really...candy! I'm guessing that they come from a far-off planet full of monarchies and no democracy...and that they want to turn all of us into their... [phone call cut off by Peri]

'OK. Enough with that conspiracism. Let's move onto our next caller. You're on the air.

'Hi, this is Priyanka. I'm a Doctor of Medicine at the Beach City Hospital. Did you get a sample of these little pink menaces? If so, have you found anything from your tests?

'That is a good question, caller. I'll let Peri field this one, since she is really into science and technology. I love those subjects since I'm really nerdy, but I like making things, such as meep morps for my favorite show of all time, Camp Pining Hearts, a lot more than learning about the ins and outs of scientific and technological processes. That's Peri's field of expertise because she is a certified technician!

'Lapis, you are right about that! I'll do my best to answer that question. During that fateful mission, Pearl had a box she could calibrate to a specific temperature, and using her wonderful cooking expertise, she put one of the candy beings inside so it would become incapacitated and not hurt anyone. Thanks to the fact that she and Carmen got out of there unscathed we were able to get a sample. In the past week, me and Pearl were running some tests on it and discovered that its matter is 100% candy. Clearly, it's not from this world or even from our home world in deep space, still ruled by the Diamond Authority. We don't know its origins. But we know that someone will be coming soon, and we will be waiting for when that person comes, to confront them and demand answers! Let me turn it back over to Lapis.

'Thanks, Peri. I'd like to take another caller. You are live, on the air.

'Hi, Lapis! This is Bismuth. Your show is so great, keep up the good work! I'd just like to say that I'd like to uppercut those upper crusts that did this horrible thing in Japan. They need to be taught a lesson! We might be at peace with the Diamonds, but that doesn't mean our job is done. There are battles to be fought, battles to be won. Thanks for accepting my call [click]

'And...That's all the time we have for this segment. I'd like to end our show with our final thoughts on this phenomenon. What is happening in Japan is horrible and we wish we could do more, but we don't exactly know what we are dealing with here. We need to deal in reality rather than wallowing in possible ignorance. It's just the right thing to do. These candy beings are self-contained within the former academy for now, building a sort of mini-kingdom. We hope that when that mysterious princess comes to inspect these beings, whenever that happens, she realizes the damage she has caused and atones for her behavior. That's the best we can hope for! Usually, I'd give this a few snorts and laughs, but this really isn't that funny of a situation, so I don't think it's appropriate. But, maybe in the future!

'Unlike Lapis, I'd like to rate this situation as five

[Steven turns on the sound effect]

'CLOUDS! CLOUDS! CLOUDS! CLOUDS! CLOUDS!'

'That's my highest rating. Seriously, those dang clods that did this better show themselves!'

Lapis and Peri then spoke in unison, closing out their show: "That's all we have for this week. Thanks so much to everyone for listening and watching! We'll be back next week with another episode of *Our Home Now!* Bye now!"

As the credits rolled and the camera panned away from them, they kissed each other tenderly. You could hear their soft lips touching, with their eyes closed, arms wrapped around each other, and heads tilted toward each other. Giggling afterward, Lapis and Peri were glad they could openly express their feelings on Earth. The kiss hadn't been scripted, of course, but neither minded showing their affection toward their significant other. Steven thought it was cute. Greg didn't know what to make of it because he wasn't used to it, even after hanging around with the Gems a bit.

Steven and Greg praised Lapis and Peri on their show, as did Carmen, Pearl, Garnet, Connie, and Bismuth. All of them offered to help in the future. Some were willing to rehearse with these wonderful Gems, create cue cards, or even perform live music for the show. Lapis and Peri appreciated all this support.

No one remembered the henchmen [captured during the joint effort](#) of Lapis, Peri, and Carmen to the area where the Sea Shrine formerly stood, Steven and Connie had interrogated over a week ago. When asked about V.I.L.E.'s plans, they claimed to *know nothing*. These henchmen resembled low-level employees in a corporation or academic institution: they served as part of the bureaucracy but didn't know much about the plans of the upper management. After confessing their henchmen jobs were only for "money" and that they had no loyalty to V.I.L.E. Steven and Connie let them leave the Crystal Temple.

From there, these former henchmen began journeying across the country, which would take them through Delmarva, Virginia, the Midwestern Republic, Kansas, Utco, and California. The Gems, especially Amethyst, Steven, and Connie, promised to join at certain points, even though they couldn't be present during the whole time due to their duty to protect the Earth.

Carmen had a dilemma of her own. Like Utena, who had been interviewed by Peri, she still was extremely traumatized by the loss of her two best friends, Ivy and Zack, when they were turned into candy. It was *almost* like they were dead, even though they were *technically* alive. She tried to not think of it, allowing her to repress the awful memories. However, the events to follow would force her to confront it head-on. Ruminating with Player, she realized there was only one option open to her: working with A.C.M.E. While Chase Devineaux seemed like a bumbling fool, if not a pompous jerk, she hoped she begin a friendly relations with his fellow agent, Julia "Jules" Argent.

That way, she could form a new team even though A.C.M.E. wanted to capture her, working as *an arm of law enforcement*. She had worked with Peri and Player to surveil A.C.M.E. She

traced them to a warehouse in Lyon, a city in the Grand French Republic (GFR), the same city which hosted the headquarters of INTERPOL. It was an organization also known as the International Criminal Police Organization. With such an operation they could finally confront "the Chief" in person, along with all the other A.C.M.E. agents. She spoke quietly into her earpiece, almost in a hushed tone. "Player, I'm ready to begin *stage 1*. I'm ready to turn myself in and end this once and for all. It's the only option I have left."

Player responded. "Ok, Red. I hope this works out. I *don't* want to lose you like we lost our other team members. Stay in contact."

Carmen said something and replied. "Can do, Player. I'm going in!"

She opened the door of the warehouse and stepped into the main room. She shouted "here, I am, Carmen Sandiego! Come and get me!" The A.C.M.E. agents surrounded her with their weapons drawn, *including Julia*. In fact, Chase was nowhere to be seen, due to the fact he had been fired due to his gross incompetence. She sat down and began to meditate with her palms facing the ceiling, something she had been practicing daily since the horrible events in Japan. The agents got closer, within arm's length. The warehouse's huge metal, rolling, door started to bend. The agents heard this and readied themselves for what would come next.

Suddenly, Bismuth's head burst through. She shouted "here...comes Bismuth!" while smashing down the door, cutting a hole in the door big enough so she could slip through. She towered over the terrified agents who fired their guns with sleeping gas as a form of self-defense. Since her body was composed of light, it didn't affect her, and the sleeping gas slipped outside the door.

Since they had to recharge their guns, they stepped back and took a defensive position. A few more figures came in alongside her: Amethyst, Pearl, Adora, and Garnet. In a unified voice, they demanded the A.C.M.E. agents release her, which the agents complied with, allowing Carmen to move toward them. Getting up from her well-deserved meditation, she walked toward the Gems. Suddenly, she surprised the befuddled agents by spinning around, addressing them by saying two words: "let's talk." Out of nowhere, the Chief appeared. She walked toward Carmen. "What is this all about, Carmen? Where's your *other* team members? You know we have been trying to chase *you* down and will not hesitate to arrest you. Truth be told, we want to know *more* about V.I.L.E. and since you *used to* work for them."

Carmen sighed. She knew the Chief told the truth. In normal circumstances, she would *never* dream of coming to A.C.M.E. for help, but this was an extreme situation.

"I want to work with you. I asked these Gems who I met in Beach City, Amethyst, Pearl, and Garnet, and their friend from a far-away planet, Adora, to join me to ensure you didn't try anything sneaky. I have abandoned being an international thief and want to do the best I can for the world. I hope I can trust you with a *new mission*."

The Chief and the agents didn't expect this. Rather than putting her in handcuffs, they pondered her proposal. Julia and Carmen began a conversation with one another. "We are more than willing to help you as long as you give us intel on V.I.L.E." Carmen gleefully responded. "Jules, I'll agree to those terms. My mission is *sensitive* but very important to me: I want to crush V.I.L.E. once and for all. I know where their headquarters is, situated in

Canary Islands, thanks to help from my hacker friend after I escaped V.I.L.E. Academy. In one fell swoop, we can raid the compound, take their data, and ensure that their evil is banished from the world! No more of these evildoers!"

Such an operation would be unprecedented for A.C.M.E. Even so, it seemed to be a great opportunity to test out their new weapon, the sleeping gas rifle. This weapon would, once it struck a foe, down them with one bullet. The Chief pressed a button and showed off their weapons arsenal. Before beginning their operation, they needed to plan. Carmen, the Chief, and Julia sat together at a table, putting together their strategy.

While Bismuth returned to Beach City, saying her goodbyes, Amethyst, Garnet, Pearl, and Adora stayed. Hoping her skills could help, Adora asked if she could join in, which Carmen *happily* accepted. Carmen pointed to a blueprint of the V.I.L.E. Academy, noting how she would lead the main charge on the first floor. Others would go into the data room, turning off the alarms. At this point, Amethyst stepped in, pointing out her shapeshifting powers. Carmen suggested that this Gem sneak into the lower level through the pipes, and get the data, assisted by A.C.M.E. agents in case she ran into any trouble. Amethyst agreed on the proviso that she could stay in contact with everyone else in case she ended up in trouble during their assault. The others present were fine with granting this proviso.

As their planning continued, Player gave Carmen an important bulletin. V.I.L.E. chatter indicated a new mission to Yokohama, Japan, presumably because they picked up *the same* peculiar energy readings, hoping to adapt whatever the agents found to evil methods. Carmen excused herself and called Lapis and Peri. She told them of the grave situation. All three agreed that if V.I.L.E. got a hand on the candy beings they could be used to wreak havoc across the world. Understanding Carmen's concern, both promised to travel to Japan immediately. They hoped to bring Utena into the fight. After returning from her phone call, everyone, including Pearl, who wanted to assist with the operation, welcomed her back. Their strategizing would go onward as they ironed out the fine details.

Meanwhile, in Beach City, Lapis and Peri ran toward the Beach House. Bismuth had returned from Lyons thanks to a nearby warp pad, chatting it up with Steven and Connie. Everyone snickered at Pumpkin, not seeing her as a "freak of nature" like Andy DeMayo described her all that time ago. Opening the door, huffing, Peri told them it was an "emergency" and they needed to go right away. Steven, Connie, and Bismuth wondered what she meant.

"Carmen just called and told me that some evildoers are going to Yokohama, that place where that awful stuff went down, which we talked about in our wonderful TubeTube show. We need to get there as soon as possible, so those candy menaces don't end up in the wrong hands! Me and Lapis can't fight off them off alone!"

Steven, Connie, and Bismuth scratched their heads. Since Yokohama was inaccessible by warp pad, Peri's demand that they "get there as soon as possible" appeared to be impossible. She grumbled as she saw eyes looking at her with confusion. She brought them to the former location of the barn and pulled off the sheet covering an irregularly shaped object. This revealed a fully outfitted hypersonic jet. The body of this aircraft was painted dark green and the wings were painted lighter green. They were also covered with alien stickers.

Everyone looked in awe as she opened her mouth. "I wasn't going to show you yet, but this is what I call the...*Peri-Jet!* It can carry all of you as it has an area for storage, with new flask Robonoids ready to be tested. OK, clods, I need you all to step into the jet, and let's go to Japan!" Carmen was *happy* to hear this. She remarked, "Peri, that's nice, but I am not getting in that cramped space. I'll fly alongside and anyone who wants to ride with me can do so."

While this disappointed Peri, she respected Lapis's decision. She had trained herself to do this more often, so they didn't get to an impasse like the time Lapis had taken the barn away to the moon. At the time, she did not want to re-live her war trauma from when she had been poofed and stuck in a mirror, nor from her fusion with Jasper as Malachite. As the jet engines started up, Connie positioned herself on Lapis's back. Peri, Bismuth, and Steven got into the cockpit, as did Pumpkin. They didn't want to bring her along, but it could work in their favor. The Peri-Jet took off with a huge boom. Lapis flew, with Connie, close-by, following the same route.

In almost no time at all, they arrived at Yokohama, Japan. Flying above the city, Peri released new robonoids through a bottom hatch, giving them orders to position themselves around the candy settlement in the city. The jet landed in an open field near to the city and cooled down. Bismuth, Peri, and Steven jumped out, joined by Pumpkin. Lapis's feet touched the ground, Connie stepped off, thanking her for the ride. She smiled and the translucent water wings retracted themselves into her back. On the way to Utena and Anthy's house, Steven and Connie talked to each other and came to an agreement. Fusing together seemed to be *the only* way to effectively fight these evildoers. Hugging each other and hoping for the best, a huge flash of light caused everyone to stop in their tracks. As the light faded into nothingness, Lapis, Peri, Bismuth, and Pumpkin stared forward and could see Stevonnie standing before them.

Running at breakneck speed, all five quickly reached Utena and Anthy's house. Anthy, who was tending the garden, surprised to see visitors, told them that she'd get "Ms. Utena." She appeared at the doorway and asked about the nature of their visit. Peri stepped forward and told her that some evildoers were coming to Yokohama. They wanted to weaponize the candy beings. While Utena didn't want to go back into the city, she promised to confront her fears and fight alongside their group of rugged warriors, if her eyes could be covered with a blindfold, preventing her from seeing the horrors. Peri *agreed* to that condition.

They couldn't go to sleep on an empty stomach. Anthy put together a stir fry using vegetables from their garden, with a side gyudon cooked by Utena in another frying pan. They ate their meal together at the dinner table, enjoying each other's company and entertained by Chu-Chu. Since Lapis, Peri, Utena, and Anthy seemed chummy, it puzzled Stevonnie. They couldn't piece together how they knew each other, so posed the question for anyone to answer.

"How do you all know each other? I ask because I know we never visited Japan on any of our missions, so I was wondering *what* brought you all together."

Peri didn't expect the question, but she had an answer prepared. Before she could say anything, Lapis took the chance to respond, ruining Peri's chance to keep a secret.

"It's this video chat thing. We chat with other same-sex couples across the world and we met them through there. It's something we started when we were chilling in the barn and have continued it since then. I love meeting other people who have the same type of relationship as us! It really makes me feel like I'm part of a bigger community."

Peri was surprised to hear this and it caught her off guard. "Lapis! You aren't supposed to tell them about that! It was *supposed* to be a secret!"

Lapis tried to reassure her. "Oh, Peri, it's okay. We are around those that accept us here, you don't have to worry. Stevonnie is non-binary and 'an experience' while Utena, Anthy, Chu-Chu, and Bismuth are our wonderful friends."

Stevonnie nodded that Lapis had described them correctly. Bismuth, on the other hand, was a *little inquisitive* since she didn't know the nature of Lapis and Peri's emotional connection. Like Stevonnie, she posed a question to both of them.

"Since you are part of this same-sex couples video chat, does that mean you consider yourselves a couple? I kinda thought so, but this is the *first time* I've heard about something like this from both of you."

Lapis beamed while Peri chuckled at the question. To her, the question was *absurd* on its face. Still, she wanted to clear up any uncertainty.

"Of course, we are a couple! We don't have to be officially married like Ruby and Sapphire with rings on our fingers, who happily reformed as Garnet, a choice of *their own* free will. A marriage certificate is something humans use to officially show their bond with each other, their great admiration. I can use my touch stumps and arms to hug Lapis, my vision spheres to see her standing before me, or smell her beautiful aromas with my scent sponges. I don't need some piece of paper! My gravity connectors are firmly planted on this planet and aren't going anywhere."

Lapis's face filled with dark blue spots the color of blueberries as she hugged Peri. As they faded away, she proceeded to add her thoughts, sharing her perspective.

"I echo Peri's sentiment but in a different way. At first, we were a bit immature, trying to find our footing on this planet. But now we realize the power of friendship and of emotional connection. We both love each other so much, just like Paulette and Percy in Camp Pining Hearts. It's only right to express that feeling to others, especially those who like a being of the same "sex" as they call it on Earth. Of course, as Gems we are sexless, but we still identify ourselves in a certain manner, and that is in a strongly feminine way."

This all made sense to Bismuth, who understood them better than anyone, as did Stevonnie. They joked about this "misunderstanding." Utena suggested they end the evening with a game of shogi, Japan's version of chess, in the house's ima. Like a game of chess that Steven and the Gems would play in Beach City, there was a king, a rook, a bishop, a knight, and pawns. However, there were some [new pieces](#): a gold general, a silver general, and a lance.

The game is made [for two players](#) who face each other, with one person winning if they took the other person's king. Each person puts their pieces on the chessboard, comprised of nine by nine squares, all the same color. Anthy and Utena were serious enough to have two stands for captured pieces *and* a chess clock. The [20 pieces](#) for each player, consisted of one king, one rook, one bishop, two gold generals, two silver generals, two knights, two lances, and nine pawns, aligned in a specific starting position, with three rows between each side. The [direction of each piece](#) indicated, they told everyone else, which player it belonged to during the game.

Modeling the first round for everyone else were Utena and Anthy who had played hundreds of times before. The winner of the game would face Stevonnie, Lapis, Peri, or Bismuth. Anthy began by moving one of her nine pawns forward, opening a diagonal path for her bishop. Utena did the same, except for her rook. The game continued onward, with each of them evenly matched, adding pieces to their stands, turning them around to indicate their capture. Not long into the game, all the pawns and lances had been eliminated like cannon fodder. This meant that each of them had their heavy-hitter pieces left, working to [defend their pieces](#) from the other player, employing [specific techniques](#) like pinning big value pieces, implementing powerful "forks" with their knights, rooks, silver generals, and others.

It seemed a little confusing at first, but every turn they could either move a piece on their board or drop an opponent's piece they had captured onto the board, often called "[drops](#)." Another important rule they highlighted to everyone else watching was a [promotion](#), meaning that when your opponent enters the "enemy camp" (three rows on either side of the board) or vice versa, they can promote their piece. Finally, they reminded people of moves [that are illegal](#) during the game itself, like "double pawn" (more than one pawn in a row) or checkmate with the use of a pawn drop. In some ways, the game *looked complex* and hard-to-follow. But, Utena and Anthy assured them it was fun to play together, which Peri, Lapis, Bismuth, and Stevonnie believed. Anthy emerged victorious in the first round, trouncing Utena with her superior game moves.

Peri and Lapis decided to give it a try. They watched the previous round very closely and felt they understood the game. Hoping to be victorious and praised, Peri prepared her head holes (ears) for the sighs of defeat. Like Utena and Anthy had done, their first moves were with their pawns. However, Lapis made a bold move, going on the offensive, effectively using her knights and rooks in "forks" to capture Peri's pieces. This game strategy caught her off guard. She had concocted the perfect approach. But Lapis countered her at every turn!

In no time at all, Lapis began to 'check' Peri's king piece, and was unable to prevent herself from being defeated. Unfortunately for her, with very few moves left, or abilities to "drop" pieces she had captured onto the board, she had no choice but to capitulate. She cried out like a deer hit with an arrow, howling in pain. Lapis *gleefully wallowed* in her utter and complete victory.

"Oh, come on, Lapis! It's not fair you won because I had a whole strategy planned out! You... little blue meanie!"

Lapis giggled. "Peri, I know you are just kidding around. I won fair and square. I just played better than, you *sweet, cute green gem*."

As she calmly felt Peri's chartreuse hair, she tussled and softly coursed her hands through it like running water. Their sparring indicated they were maturing *together*, different from their experience in the barn. Furthermore, the hug between them after congratulating each other showed their love becoming stronger by the day. Their membership in REZU truly represented the nature of their relationship.

Since the sun had dropped below the horizon, neither Bismuth nor Stevonnie wanted to play Lapis in another round of shogi. As Utena showed them to their sleeping quarters, Anthy could see that Peri and Lapis were exhausted, so she reminded them that the cypress soaking tub was available for them to relax in, where they could decompress from their day and the challenges that lay ahead. While Peri declined, Lapis jumped at the opportunity. She flew into the tub. Only her head bobbed above the water's edge. The warmth calmed her down. She used her powers to manipulate water to do some neat little tricks. It made her snort, then cackle.

In the meantime, Peri and Pumpkin rolled around on the tatami mats in the ima. They were having fun. She cared about her dear "veggie head," with this sentient pumpkin barking. It liked her and Lapis, while accepting Utena and Anthy. It didn't growl or act hostile toward them. After unwinding in the tub, she joined Peri. Both proceeded to cuddle their pet, rewarding her affection and loyalty.

As everyone went to sleep, with Peri and Lapis putting their arms around Pumpkin, *no one* remembered their previous promise to keep shifts and watch the security cameras. Thinking ahead, Peri had told her loyal robonoids to keep watch and let her know if anything suspicious approached the walls of the candy settlement. If they found anything, an alert would be sent to her tablet. It would play a loud noise and wake her up. She fell asleep, assured that nothing would go wrong during the night. The new day would greet them with unique challenges...

End Notes

The pages for Peridot, Too Short to Ride, Pumpkin, and TubeTube on the Steven Universe fandom, the official Steven Universe-Lapis and Peridot video chat animated short, the "Dove Self-Esteem Project x Steven Universe: Media and Celebrities" animated short and two fanfictions [here](#) and [here](#).

The name of Peridot and Lapis's show derives primarily from Peridot's plea for Lapis to stay in "Raising the Barn", when she says "I think we should stay...we should find for this life we've built...I think we can win...Earth is our home now. Isn't it worth fighting for?" Additionally, in "Gem Harvest", Lapis retorts when seeing Andy DeMayo "we're not leaving our home," although she is singularly talking about the barn rather than Earth itself.

For the section about their show, I used John Constine's "YouTube Will Completely Remove Videos Of Creators Who Don't Sign Its Red Subscription Deal" (TechCrunch), Bob Lonsberry's "How to Be a Talk Show Host" (Talkers), Sam Ashe-Edmonds's "How to Become a Host of Your Own Interviewing Show" (Chron), Krishna Reddy's "How to Become a TV Show Host? 15 Awesome Tips" (wisestep), Thomas Tennant's "How to Be a Talk Show Host" (liveaboutdotcom), "Learning How to Host a Talk Show Just Became a Lot Easier" (Broadcasters Mentoring Group), Thomas Tennant's "10 Tips on How Best to Start an Online Talk Show" (liveaboutdotcom), "How to Create a Talk Show on YouTube" (wikihow), and "How to Create a Web Show on YouTube" (wikihow).

I also read out the whole section about their show to ensure that it actually takes 10 minutes to read through, making it as genuine as possible, modeling it a bit on what the morning C-SPAN radio show, which I have listened to a good deal, often sounds like. To describe Peridot and Lapis's unscripted kiss, I used "How to Describe a Kiss" on wikihow as a guide. The mentions of Japanese foods they cooked derives from "Weeknight Meal Ideas: 15 Easy Japanese Recipes" on Just One Cookbook.

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!